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THE MISSION OF JUDAISM : A REPLY.

THE twenty-one opinions published in the last number of this REVIEW upon the presentation which I had made of the Mission of Judaism in the *Fortnightly Review* of October, 1896, are of value as much on account of their objections as for their acquiescence. Every one of those writers has approached the subject in a spirit which seems to realize that the time is ripe for discussing it. Even those who are most opposed to any immediate declaration to the outer world of the Faith of Israel, admit that that faith was never designed to be for all time the exclusive possession of a single race. Such opponents to my scheme as Mr. Lucien Wolf, the Rev. S. Singer and Lady Magnus, and Mr. Zangwill (I mention them in the degree, as it appears to me, of their opposition to my views) almost apologize for their reluctance or hesitation to see the faith which they hold disseminated among people who are not Jews. Their criticisms are, from my own point of view, most helpful, just because they are (unconsciously to the writers perhaps) frank admissions that some explanation is required for the extreme reticence which the Jews in emancipated countries still preserve in regard to the secret of their religious faith. Mr. Lucien Wolf is afraid lest in breaking this silence some of the Jewish ritual will be sacrificed. He fears lest it be discovered that the universal elements in the Jewish faith have already entered into some Christian prayers. He apprehends that some such form of public worship as I have proposed might involve what he so pathetically dreads, and what he would not "care to see,"

namely, "ever so small a mantle of Judaism thrown over it." And he adds: "We must either propagate Judaism in its entirety or not at all." The "entirety of Judaism," in Mr. Wolf's view and that of multitudes of Jews, of course includes rites of so exclusive a character as to render them impracticable for adaptation beyond the confined limits of a single group of families. Here one is face to face with a difficulty that lies outside the real problem. Briefly it is this: The Jews themselves, before they begin to teach their faith to non-Jews, must disentangle it from the cobwebs of ritual with which centuries of enforced isolation have well-nigh submerged it. I quite realized that this task would confront any Jew who believed in the propagation of his faith. But I never believed that the work of disentanglement would be begun until individual Jews were able to demonstrate to their own people that their religious faith was acceptable to non-Jews. One of the first most satisfactory results of such a movement as I have foreshadowed will be to lead Jews of the type of Mr. Wolf to distinguish between the faith of Israel and its outer shell—the ritual. So long as a Jew regards the "entirety" as consisting of a ritual and of a faith both of equal value—he is *ipso facto* disqualified from becoming an active missionary to non-Jews. And nothing can be more certain than that no missionary can succeed in teaching the faith which is in him, if that faith be not of a character to render it independent of the elaborate network of ritual grown up in the course of ages around a small group of people who have been for so long isolated in their religious life.

I recognize at once that I am here speaking of two kinds of ritual as though they were only one. And I shall be told that there was a ritual identified with Judaism in the earliest stages of its history, which therefore cannot be called an aftergrowth. True! But it is just this element of the Jewish ritual which has undergone within the Jewish fold, and under the fullest sanction of authority, both Biblical and rabbinical, the greatest possible change.

The earliest Jewish sacrificial ritual was that established for the temple, and abrogated when the second temple fell. The most orthodox and exclusive teachers of the Synagogue have never suggested that Judaism was impaired by a hair's breadth in consequence of the total abolition of the sacrificial rite. From the point of view of the Reform schools of thought we have not only lost nothing but gained unspeakably by the fact that that ancient rite has disappeared. One of the most astounding features in the history of the development of Judaism is the fact that the sacrificial rite, which holds so conspicuous a place in the Pentateuch, has been for two thousand years completely abolished, and that Judaism has continued to develop from that day to this. The tradition has in no way been broken. The period of captivity has witnessed the production of Jewish luminaries who cannot be said to hold an inferior rank to those who lived when the temple was securely established. If we can survive so great a revolution as the abolition of the temple and the cessation of the Hebrew national polity, much more likely are we to survive the extinction of minor customs, which, as I have said, are nothing more than the common-place badges of an enforced and artificial separateness. But I have not even suggested that the Jewish people as a whole need part with these observances. All I have indicated is that whoever makes the first attempt to let the Jewish faith be embraced by non-Jews and to recommend the acceptance of it by them, will not be called upon to invite them to adopt all the special customs peculiar to the Jewish people. The rite of circumcision has no direct connexion with the conception of and the worship of God which it is the mission of Israel to spread. To identify in an inseparable manner the great spiritual needs of human nature with any special rite whatever is a philosophical blunder, and involves the gravest misapprehension of spiritual truths. Even St. Paul recognized this fact, at a period in the history of mankind when there would have

been a greater show of reason if he had accompanied his religious teaching with a recommendation to the pagan peoples to adopt certain Hebrew practices.

Mr. Lucien Wolf is pleading not for the faith but for the crust of the faith.

The Rev. S. Singer, who is recognized as a champion of the faith as well as of its crust, raises a different issue. He apprehends that such a Church of Israel as I desire to see in the midst of English society would increase or create afresh a "din and tumult" of rival missionary efforts. Here it is logically convenient to connect the grounds of his opposition with those of Mr. Lucien Wolf, for they seem to neutralize one another. Mr. Wolf objects to the proposed church of Israel because it might be like other churches. Mr. Singer objects to it because it will increase the number of missionary efforts in this country. Mr. Wolf says that if a certain prayer already in use by Christians presented an idea in common between Jews and Christians I could not exclude it. Indeed he continues that I have already admitted as much by proposing a few selections from *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. This criticism has a peculiar value, for it enables me to say at once that those elements of the Divine Faith of Israel which have already penetrated beyond the limits of our race, in spite of the studied religious reserve of Jews for centuries, would be instantly and gladly recognized as the outcome of the revelation which the people of Israel have inherited. If persons who have been estranged from one another for a long period of time discover at their meeting that there are fragments and relics and other possessions which belonged originally to some ancestors of either of them, would they not rejoice at the discovery? One of the greatest facts in regard to the genius of Israel's faith is that through his sons there have come down to multitudes who are not Israelites precious heirlooms of the ancient faith and of the ancient spiritual culture. The one thing in Christianity which breathes into it the elements of truly

ethical and spiritual life is its Jewish ancestry. Its founder—whatever he was not—was undoubtedly a Jew of the highest order of spirituality—charity of heart and love of the human race were his most endearing characteristics—and they were in his time, beyond doubt, the special and characteristic products of the Jewish religion. Some of the prayers to be found in Catholic missals and in the Book of Common Prayer belonging to the Church of England do unquestionably contain sentiments which belong to the genius of Israel's faith, and which have been composed by those who had caught the spirit of the Old Testament. The language of them is only marred in such places where Almighty God is represented as being invisible except through an intermediary. I should pity any Jew who would be unable to offer such a prayer as the following : " O Lord, who hast taught us that all our doings without charity are nothing worth, pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues, without which whosoever liveth is counted dead before thee." Again, what Jew, who is something more than a mere race Jew, would deny the religious value of such a prayer as this : " Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid ; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee and worthily magnify thy holy name " ? To find in common with the non-Jew such prayers as these would be, to quote one of my commentators, Miss Sylvie D'Avigdor, " a recognition, not a reconciliation." And if I linger on this point raised by Mr. Wolf, it is because it raises a question so vital to the movement which I am advocating that it touches the very root of the question. If it be supposed that the spread of Judaism means the founding of a new sect, which shall be in conflict with all existing sects, the scheme which I cherish has been misconceived by my critics. The object is not, as Mr. Singer supposes, to raise new barriers and to create fresh issues, but the con-

trary ; it is to heal and to bind and to unite in a common worship of the Universal Father those who have been hitherto rent asunder. One of the very first problems which it would be the purpose of such a communion to face is to exhume as it were the kernel of the religious idea now buried beneath the sand of legalism, and to bring up to the surface of the earth that which has lain buried for generations below the crust of sectarianism and human strife. Not only would I not hesitate to adopt any prayer which expressed my ideas, but I should rejoice at every fresh relic that might be discovered of the ancient faith which had been imbedded beneath the trappings of ages. The early centuries of the Christian churches have enveloped the faith which the great Jew of Nazareth had by his life and his example bequeathed.

Mr. Wolf's contention about non-Jewish prayers involves the question of the Jewish origin of that aspect of Christianity which is distinct from the Hellenism with which it made a compromise. And this question of its Jewish origin inevitably brings me into conflict with the warning which Mr. Charles Voysey offers to me in regard to what I may have to say about Jesus of Nazareth. It will save endless misunderstanding, if I endeavour to make it clear to Mr. Voysey and his followers that it is impossible for me to approach that subject from his point of view. To Mr. Voysey, and those who owe their Theism to his influence, the name of Jesus represents something from which they have dissented and broken away. In their mental perspective Jesus is the one figure in religious history which has come to typify ideas, the opposition to which has caused them to form their separate communion. To their minds Jesus means the doctrine of the Incarnation which they are established for the purpose of refuting, and the name is, moreover, identified in their view with questions of literary criticism and interpretation which do not affect the scheme which I am propounding. To a Jew who desires the spread of his faith the name of Jesus has

a totally different import. It is identified with nothing from which we have ever had occasion to part company. On the other hand it holds a place in the religious history of the Jewish faith which no Israelite with a spark of the scientific spirit can possibly ignore. It might be, in the view of some people, an easier course to ignore it. It might be more convenient, in the interest of avoiding any fresh misunderstandings or disagreement, if the Jew who believes in the spread of Judaism were in this matter to assume the same attitude of silence which the Jew who does not believe in the spread of Judaism is able to maintain. But it would not be frank on my part if I were for one moment to shirk all the consequences, or any one of them, which I know to be involved in the mere discussion of a scheme for the active propagation of the Jewish faith. And there is, beyond all question, here involved the question of the attitude which I, as the very humble proposer of this scheme, am prepared to assume and do assume in regard to the position of Jesus of Nazareth in the history of the Jewish faith. I approach the question without fear or hesitation. The name of Jesus represents to my mind a distinct and definite stage in the history of that development of Judaism to which I referred in the *Fortnightly* of October. Admitting the discrepancies of the Gospel narratives, and the uncertainty attaching even to those fragments of them which are more or less reliable, there is a broad fact which no historical student and no philosophical mind can possibly overlook. Whatever be the causes and the origin of the circumstance, there does stand out before mankind a certain figure, or a personality which for the purpose of my argument might even have been a creature of imagination—but nevertheless there has stood out, and there remains in the imagination of Western nations, the personality of one who lived and died in a sense in which few other individuals before him had lived and died—to teach mankind God and to exhibit the beauty of holiness. That one figure, whom so many nations

in various ways have grasped, was the figure of a Jew—a man who lived and taught and died within the Jewish fold. Whether his following was great or small, whether his contemporaries understood him or understood him not, the figure remains with a strength, a force of character, a personal magnetism, which none can gainsay. Why is a Jew of all people, especially the Jew who believes in the spread of his faith, to ignore so striking and noble a figure? The answer of course would be what it always was, namely, that because this figure has been deified, and continues to be deified, we Jews, who are forbidden to form any corporeal conception of God, are best advised by treating the idea of his existence as though it had never been. It is contended that as a matter of safety and expediency it is wise and discreet to preserve an unbroken silence about him; though we may discourse as much as we like about the figures mentioned in the Pentateuch, not one of which, except that of Moses, presents anything like the charm and interest which attaches to the name of Jesus, while no more certainty belongs to the historical value of the records about them than to the records about him. This is a position which I understand, and which may be justified in so far as regards the history of the Jews in the Middle Ages. But it cannot, in my most humble and prayerful judgment be maintained any longer. The mere belief that an ideal Jew has influenced the world by his genius for the God idea is a fact of tremendous consequence to the very proposition which I am enunciating, namely, that the race and the inspiration of Israel are the means of divine teaching to the world. The bitterest fanatic or Jew-hater that the dark ages have produced has never yet dared to assert that God, in his inscrutable judgment, had elected or permitted that an ideal Greek or Roman or a great Assyrian should teach God's ways to men. The greatest opponents of the Jews since their Dispersion have based their opposition on the hypothesis—uncritical

though it was—that this greatest “Light of the Gentiles” was a Jew whom his own people rejected.

These facts have entered deeply into the analysis of religious history, and no Jew can be justified in inviting his non-Jewish neighbours to accept his faith if he is unprepared to tell them how he regards the Founder of Christianity.

Mr. Voysey finds it difficult to give a place in the history of religion to any single figure. But the Jews do not find that difficulty. We are quite accustomed to a hierarchy of religious figures in our history. Mr. Voysey does not perhaps realize that in orthodox traditional Judaism Moses, and Abraham, and David occupy very distinguished places in that hierarchy. Their names are even introduced into the Jewish prayers. And some of the most important prayers in the so-called statutory liturgy describe the Deity as the God of particular persons. Indeed in some older forms of prayer we have, what to some of us is highly objectionable, “Do this for the sake of so and so.” I should say incidentally that I would omit all such phrases from the compilation of Jewish prayers which I am contemplating. I mention these things merely to assure Mr. Voysey and others that Jewish history is quite habituated to single out groups of persons who have lived for and taught the religious idea, and that the omission of the name of Jesus is not due to the absence of such a habit, but to quite other reasons—reasons which I submit may now be disposed of. Expediency is a motive which has determined many movements of thought as well as a great many courses of action. And I contend that the long silence in the Jewish pulpit and in Jewish religious literature in respect to the personality of Jesus has been due to the motive of expediency. It was an overcaution—not in the Middle Ages unjustifiable—to prevent the Jews adopting Christian theology and to prevent the diffusion of false reports as to the attitude of Judaism to the subject of monotheism. This reticence and reserve in relation

to a subject which so manifestly concerns the Jewish race is probably the most remarkable instance of self-possession that can be met in the high road or the byways of history. Again, to say nothing on a given subject is often a more expedient course than to say something which is likely to be misconceived. And the reserve on this subject may not unfairly be described as a policy of silence. That silence could easily be maintained so long as there was no religious intercourse between Jews and non-Jews. But the moment we open our portals to those whose religious ideas have come to them only in connexion with the name of Jesus, that silence must be broken.

My friend Mr. C. G. Montefiore asks for a statement of the "attitude of the new Judaism," as he elects to call it, towards four important subjects with which I shall endeavour to deal presently. Of these four subjects one of them relates to the personality and teaching of Jesus, and another "towards the New Testament as a whole," and therefore may be referred to in this place. I trust that Mr. Montefiore and other critics who, like him, sympathize in the main with my proposals, and do indeed share to a large extent those convictions to which I have given faltering utterance, will perceive from what is here written that I am not unprepared to meet this particular question. The ideal Jesus, detached as he is in the mind of an Israelite from that theological confusion with which his name has become entangled in the thoughts of such non-Jewish theists as Mr. Voysey, is a type and representative of a fullness of faith and a purity of worship which stands out as a brilliant example of the life with God. The subject can only be lightly touched upon in this place, for it is sufficiently comprehensive to be treated in a separate essay or series of essays. But the inception of the movement for the spread of the Jewish faith shall never be marred so far as I am concerned by any hesitation upon this question. One of the distinguishing features between the kind of preaching which I contemplate and that of Mr. Voysey's Theistic

Church, is that we as Jews have nothing to say against the personality and the teaching of Jesus so far as anything is known about it. We have not to dissociate our thoughts from previous ideas on the doctrine of the Incarnation, because we have never held them. Nor would it be required to spend such missionary strength as might be vouchsafed to us in explaining that Jesus was not the Incarnation of the Deity, or the Mediator between God and humanity, for the reason that throughout Jewish history it has never been supposed that he was. What Jews preaching to non-Jews might say about Jesus would be much the same as what they might have to say about other illustrious exponents of their faith. It is my own earnest conviction that if the contemporaries of Jesus had recognized him as the true Jewish reformer which I believe him to have been, they would have rallied around him and would have seriously considered his claim to rescue the spirit of religion from the deadening influences of excessive legalism and ritualism by which in his time that spirit was being obscured. If the priests and the educated classes of Jews of that period had so rallied around him they would have probably prevented the religious movement in which he was engaged assuming political aspects, which it did in consequence of the folly and the ignorance of well-meaning but illiterate followers. There need have been no trial before Pontius Pilate and no execution. One sighs to contemplate the loss of those greater blessings which would have ensued to the people of Israel, and indeed to other peoples, if that horrible execution had been averted. Throughout the history of the Jews, even to our own day, there has been a disposition to meet with distrust and suspicion any tendency which an individual may show to elevate the spiritual aspects of Judaism above the letter of the Law. On a much smaller scale within the present century, and in London, there was a small group of fine spirits in the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue of London who were possessed of a deep sense of the necessity to

improve the conditions of public worship and of religious instruction. They were met with stern rebuke and obstinate resistance. The result was the formation of a seceding body of Jews, now known as the West London Synagogue of British Jews. They were of course excommunicated, and there is some dead letter to that effect still extant in regard to them.

Any one who has carefully considered the history of Judaism from within is not at all surprised at the consequences which followed the teaching about Jesus after his death.

Mr. Zangwill, in his criticism of my plea for the spread of the Jewish faith, writes in this REVIEW in a tone which leaves it uncertain whether he is with me or against me. A pathetic story which he contributed to the last Christmas number of the *English Illustrated Magazine*, entitled "The Conciliator of Christendom," leads me to suppose that he is one of those critics who is subject to moods when dealing with religious or philosophical problems. And I cannot escape the reflection that Mr. Zangwill is not quite at rest in his own mind, at the present moment, upon the question, whether the religion of Israel is really a Catholic faith or one only adapted to a particular group of persons. Mr. Wolf is clearly of opinion that the Jewish religion is not suitable for any but Jews. Mr. Zangwill, on the other hand, seems to preserve an open mind on the problem. Both of these writers appear to my own mind to approach the subject of the Jewish religion from points of view which seem to ignore the very essence of the Faith, namely, its apprehension and its adoration of the "God of the spirits of all flesh." And like most Jews who have been brought up under the influence of legalism and outward observances from which they have emancipated themselves, they have unconsciously permitted their view of the Jewish religion to be veiled by its excessive elaboration of outward observances.

In a former number of this REVIEW I contributed an essay upon Reformed Judaism, in which I submitted that the spread of Judaism was not likely to be initiated except by such Jews as were at heart reformers. And here it is necessary to observe that the popular notion of Judaism being divided into two camps, namely orthodox and reformed, is an error. There are in truth not less than three camps. Besides the reformers and the orthodox, there are many Jews of striking individuality and of ardent attachment to their race who are neither orthodox nor reformers. I am not alluding to the class which might be called renegades, because the men I refer to are sincerely devoted to their people and do possess a certain, though undefined, affection for the ceremonial observances of Judaism. And such people are not agnostics, but believers in the one God. Yet they are intellectually estranged from orthodox Judaism, and never have associated themselves with any reform movement within the Jewish fold. They are critics towards every school of thought which is presented to them. But they stand outside these schools. Their early education having been conducted under the immediate influence of orthodox Judaism, the balance of their affections leans on the side of orthodox Judaism rather than with any species of reform. I know several individuals of my race whose negative attitude towards any direct effort in favour of religious revival can only be explained in this way.

Mr. H. S. Lewis, on the other hand, represents in the symposium an attitude of philosophic orthodox Judaism. And it is singularly gratifying to observe that his opposition to my scheme is not based upon the allegation that the Jewish faith is inherently a non-Catholic faith. Quite the contrary. He pleads that Judaism is meant for the world, and insists that it should be presented in the exact form and outer garb with which the Jewish people have possessed it. And he supplies historical evidence of the fact that orthodox Judaism is consistent with the idea of a universal faith and worship.

Lady Magnus has assumed a position which I must frankly admit I am unable to comprehend. She quotes the words of the second Isaiah which I had referred to as the expression of the missionary obligation of Israel as though they meant the exact opposite of what is expressed by them. "Ye are my witnesses," Lady Magnus informs us, has no conceivable connexion with the idea of missionary work. And she goes so far as to compare the idea of a witness with that of a mountain. I accept the analogy so far as the mountain is seen by those who visit it, and so far as its stately pre-eminence might be likened to that very rare form of silence which is actually golden. But if she means that a witness is to be like a mountain, for ever silent and always in the same place, I fear that our difference resolves itself into a disagreement about the use of the English language rather than about the destiny of Israel. If a witness is not to give evidence, I know not what a witness is. And how it is possible to give evidence, except of mere existence, by an unbroken silence to be extended through the span of human history, is beyond my understanding. There are two other points in Lady Magnus's contribution, one of which need only be stated to be refuted. First she observes that "God in his own good time will see to it that his earth is filled with the knowledge of him, but he needs no Procrustean methods." I can only assure Lady Magnus and any who may think as she does that I should consider any attempt to suggest that the time has come for the spread of our faith unwarrantable if I were not most solemnly convinced that it is the Divine Will that this matter should be considered now in our own generation. And equally certain is it to my own mind that no word would have been uttered on this momentous question until and unless it was plainly the Will of God that we should speak what was in our hearts.

Lady Magnus's suggestion that my proposals are "a hurried ideal" is comparatively unimportant because it is quite personal. But as she has thought it necessary

to make the remark, it seems right to say that the conception of Judaism which I had learnt from my parents at the early age at which religious teaching is imparted was always identified with the belief that Judaism was intended to be the faith of all people, and the spread of it was only suspended through external and artificial circumstances. When I was taught the *Shemang Yisrael* as soon as I could speak, I was also taught that this was a doctrine specially revealed to Israel for the purpose of Israel teaching it to the world. And when I was in my teens I distinctly acquired the conviction that the seclusion of the Faith of Israel was merely a temporary condition, but that soon, even when I grew to manhood, it might be possible to teach that faith to others who were not Jews.

I come now to the consideration of the objections raised by the Chief Rabbi, and I desire to acknowledge his kind personal references. The Chief Rabbi appears to have approached the subject from a point of view which must be considered as distinctly apart from the philosophical contemplation of the subject. One of his objections, I venture to think, I have already anticipated in the preface to the symposium. "Would not half-hearted Jews eagerly welcome such a religion, freed from the, to them, irksome encumbrance, ritual, but which they would still view as some form of Judaism?" My answer is that if the spread of Judaism shall incidentally be the means of bringing back to the fold of Israel "half-hearted Jews," I should be most grateful to welcome them. I am aware that the habit of thought, to which, in another connexion, I have already alluded, that strange preference in the orthodox Jewish mind for extinction rather than reform, induces ardent orthodox Jews to close their eyes with mild regret when they see their brethren lapsing into religious apathy, but to open them in horror when they perceive that the apathy is exchanged for some definite religious faith which may deviate from the orthodox. I know full well

that some earnest orthodox Jews would rather that members of their fold should exist as nominal Jews who observe no religious practice, and who bring up their children as agnostics, than that they should see them drawn to God by any means which deviated in the slightest degree from the orthodox position. From these I do most profoundly differ. This notion has been repeated in many forms and may be expressed by the common phrase, "the whole or nothing." But the fact that so many elect nothing rather than the whole of orthodox Judaism is no shock to the religious consciousness of the orthodox schools of thought, compared with the resentment which it feels by the adoption of a mitigated form of outward observances. But Dr. Adler is mistaken in assuming that the Judaism which I would desire preached to the outer world is simply a belief in the Unity of God, and the observance of the Moral Law. I have nowhere written any words which are open to this construction. So far from it, in all my writings upon the subject I have expressly and emphatically declared that one of the causes that would give to a Jewish Theistic Church a force and an attraction which other non-Jewish Theistic movements lack is that it would be inseparable from the great historic backbone of the Jewish religion, with its ritual observances—limited only so far as would be indispensable to prevent them from acting as deterrents. I have said that the rite of circumcision, presented as an essential condition of joining the communion which I have foreshadowed, would be an immediate and an impassable barrier. So too would be the Saturday observance of the Sabbath. But I have stated that the Day of Atonement, the Pass-over, and several other Jewish observances should be maintained. But supposing I had not taken this course, and had even offered to the "half-hearted Jew" in express terms a reconciliation with his ancestral faith by means solely of "a belief in the Unity of God and the observance of the Moral Law, to be recognized by him" as

some form of Judaism "preached," as Dr. Adler writes, "permissu superiorum," the proposal would have in it more than has ever been offered to that type of Jew by the unbending and unconciliating yoke of orthodoxy. Would it be no gain to the ideals of our race and faith if the so-called "half-hearted Jew," who is at present an utter stranger to the synagogue, and to all its rites and to all its faith, were brought back through "a belief in the unity of God and the observance of the Moral Law" to the faith and to the ideal of his race? Is not the very question an admission of the allegations which I have made in regard to the pretensions and claims of Orthodoxy?

The Chief Rabbi proceeds to point out the dangers to the Jews themselves of actively propagating their faith. This is the argument of expediency, which cannot be entertained from any philosophical standpoint. But in regard to it I am bound to utter an emphatic protest from the depth of my own soul. Would to God, I will say, that Anti-Semitism could base its case against us Jews upon any active attempt on our part to fulfil the purpose for which we are Jews. I for one am willing, and would gladly face any Anti-Semitism which might be founded on this specific charge. But alas! our experience of latter day Anti-Semitism in Berlin, and in Vienna, and in Paris is not founded on the allegation that the emancipated Jews of those cities have conceived the idea of spreading broadcast the doctrine of the Unity of God and the claims of perfect righteousness. Jealousy and envy of their success in material walks of life is given as the reason for this Anti-Semitism. And my belief is that so soon as it could be shown that the energies of the Jewish race were concentrated upon the spiritual mission which in my view alone justifies their separateness, the voice of Anti-Semitism would be silenced for ever. But should it happen in the mysterious scheme of Divine Providence that the active propagation of the faith of Israel is to bring upon Israel fresh visitations of the enmity of

mankind, I should implore any one of my brethren who contemplated joining in such a work to stand back, and to abstain, unless he were possessed of the spirit that can face all risks and all dangers. I repeat again, that no Jew could be of any service in such a work whose heart was not stout enough to face the dangers of the situation, if dangers there be. But it appears to me that to hold out such a threat or such a fear to a community of emancipated, prosperous, English Jews, whose ancestors have not shrunk from any form of tribulation and suffering which the preservation of their trust involved, is a species of rhetoric which may be dismissed as rhetoric and as possessing nothing whatever to alarm any philosophical temperament.

My personal esteem for the Chief Rabbi is so great, and my appreciation of the exalted nature of the office which he holds is so complete, that I can only assume that he has put forth these arguments in defence of defenceless people abroad whom he has persuaded himself might be affected by what is done in England. And I feel sure that such arguments could never have presented themselves to his view if, out of the abundance of his learning, he could have produced some cogent reasons or authorities for the logical alternative to my scheme, an alternative which could only consist of a dogma that Judaism is *not* a religion for the world, but only for the Jews.

If I were to refer to the objections of the Rev. S. Friederburg, the minister of the chief synagogue in Liverpool, I should have to repeat the reply which I have ventured to make to the Chief Rabbi, because he has taken precisely the same ground.

The Rev. L. M. Simmons, the minister of the Reform synagogue in Manchester, claims that the Jewish religion is already penetrating into non-Jewish quarters. The prophet Malachi's words, Mr. Simmons reminds us, are nearer fulfilment than they were—"All Christians, from Catholics to Unitarians, would call themselves Monotheists." In

other words the special work of Israel in making God known to mankind is being carried out by those who are not Israelites, namely, Christians whose spirits have already been touched by the inspiration of Israel's prophets in the past. And the logical inference of this process of thought is that because our work, the work of Jews, is being advanced by others, we may rest content. This argument is repeated by others, and it amounts to a curious assumption which, if carried into other spheres of action, would be dangerously like saying the following: Suppose you are appointed to do certain duties in life, and to your great delight and relief you discover that those duties are being done more or less by other people, you can consider yourself absolved. If I find myself in a situation in which my help is required I might wait to see whether somebody else will not volunteer to do what I ought to do. Such an attitude of mind is not only reprehensible in itself, but if carried to its logical result would leave many noble deeds undone. But Mr. Simmons's illustration of the way that monotheism is being taught by Christians is not a satisfactory illustration, for from the light which has shone upon Israel it is clear that a monotheism which is reconcilable with the doctrine of three persons in one God is not the monotheism to which Israel was called to witness and to teach.

I may perhaps be pardoned on the ground of want of space, as well as from the fear of wearying my readers, if I abstain from further comment on the present occasion of other criticisms which have been offered in this REVIEW, and I may be permitted to pass on to the consideration of what has been written by those who are fundamentally agreed with me.

My friends Mr. Israel Abrahams, the Rev. Morris Joseph, and Colonel Goldsmid have powerfully maintained the cause which I am advocating. And Mr. Abrahams understands me aright when he points out that the sense of truth rather than the assurance of success is the hope

which sustains my belief in the Divine and Universal destiny of our race.

Miss Sylvie D'Avigdor raises a question which is cognate to the subject when she points out the reviving influence upon Jews themselves, which will inevitably arise so soon as they perceive that their faith is the need of others besides their own people.

The sympathetic support which is given to the scheme by such valiant non-Jewish Unitarians as my venerated and greatly-loved friend Dr. Martineau, by Miss Anna Swanwick, by the Rev. Dr. Drummond (the Principal of the Unitarian College at Oxford), and by so profound a thinker as the Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, are tokens of very true encouragement. No apology was needed from Dr. Drummond or Mr. Carpenter for their inquiries as to the potentialities of Reformed Judaism in regard to the problems of sin and of unsectarian philanthropy. The spirit in which Dr. Drummond contemplates the possibility of Jews teaching Theism is parallel to that which I would hope animates all Jews when they observe the efforts of non-Jews to teach the very faith for which we are consecrated. I would answer him at once, that no attempt could possibly be made to win proselytes in the sense in which it was understood under the constitution of the ancient polity now defunct. What we should offer to non-Jews is not the empty badges of a nationality which has long since been suspended, but the living faith of the second Isaiah, "without price," "without baptism." "Ho, every one that is thirsty, come ye to the waters," would be the missionary call of Reformed Judaism.

Mr. Estlin Carpenter raises two questions, the first of which coincides with that of my friend Mr. C. G. Montefiore. I will take the second first, as Mr. Carpenter alone raises it. He observes: "Any fresh teaching which Judaism may have to offer will be likely to be tested by its applicability to new social ideals in which no race limitations can be recognized." This is a proposition with which I entirely

concur. The barrier of race will be passed by the message which shall be given to those who stand beyond it. A "universal," and "not a national philanthropy," may reasonably be expected to be taught by those Jews who can realize that their religion is a Universal one. Mr. Carpenter, not unnaturally, adopts the error of persons who are unacquainted, as he says, with "the spiritual life of Judaism," when he supposes that the "generosity of rich Jews" is confined "to their own people." A mere cursory glance at lists of contributions to the Indian Famine Fund, and indeed of every non-sectarian public fund, is enough to prove beyond a doubt that Judaism, in its own confined area has not been inconsistent with a spirit of philanthropy so broad and so catholic as almost to put into the shade by comparison the generosity of the wealthiest members of other denominations. The proportion of Jews who always contribute to the Hospital Sunday Fund, and to other general charitable objects is, both in the number of contributors and in amount, proportionately larger than the offerings which flow from any other religious sect even in England.

As to the problem of sin which Mr. Carpenter touches, there is perhaps no aspect of religious thought upon which Judaism can speak so freshly and so vigorously as upon this vital question. The optimism which is so characteristic of Judaism in all ages is itself an assurance that this particular subject will be approached in a manner that will render it free from the exaggeration and gloom with which the pessimism of other systems has hampered it. The teaching even of the much criticized Pentateuch, and still more of the prophet Ezekiel in regard to sin and deliverance from sin, will certainly be available in the communion of the Church of Israel. Mr. Carpenter will, for reasons I have already mentioned, permit me to reserve for some other occasion what I have to say on this large question, and what non-Jews have a right to demand from a missionary Jew on so grave an issue. It will be seen that the

reserve force which the Jewish race "must have laid up," as Mr. Carpenter truly imagines, "of an immense store of moral achievement" *can* be utilized in the moral and spiritual teaching before us.

Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Montefiore, as would be expected from two such scholars as they are in the field of Higher Criticism, take for granted that, in proposing to make others share the faith which is in me, that faith must in some critical way depend upon the attitude which I hold towards the authority of the Scriptures. Mr. Montefiore asks categorically, (1) "What is to be the *exact* position towards the Pentateuch and the Law?" (2) "The *exact* position towards the miracles of the Old Testament?" (the italics are my own), and (3) "What is to be the relation to the personality of Jesus and to the New Testament?" The third question I have already dealt with. As to the first two, which are practically the same as Mr. Carpenter puts to me, I must frankly reply that the conception of the faith and of the mission in the teaching of that faith which I personally hold, is one which does not involve any necessity whatever to hold an *exact* attitude, either towards the Pentateuch and the Law or towards the miracles of the Old Testament. And, as a matter of fact, I neither hold any exact attitude towards these subjects, nor would it ever enter my mind to recommend to any human soul to whom I would desire to impart my faith, that it was essential that he should hold an exact attitude towards the Pentateuch, the Law, or the miracles of the Old Testament. And here it is necessary to observe that faith in God, and in the ultimate triumph of eternal righteousness as the expression of his Divine Will, is a gift from God himself direct to each individual soul which can be possessed of such consciousness. Nothing that was ever written in any book, nor anything which can be written in commentary of any book, will convey this supreme revelation to the individual mind. The claim which I have put forth for the people of Israel, as a people, is that they of all nations of antiquity, and of all groups of living descendants

of an ancient people, have received, in a larger measure and in a more emphatic sense than any other people, the possession of this gift. The footprints of that gift are found throughout the literature of their race, and their tradition. The consciousness of this gift of the knowledge of God has leaked out here and there in the processes of the ages, and has never, for two thousand years, been able quite to hide itself. The consciousness of God and of his infinite love has been, and is to this day, so intense in the Jewish mind that it can scarcely contain itself. It oozes out in all directions, and it is discovered, though not always recognized, here, there, and everywhere. The Pentateuch is a compilation of which no Jew is justified in speaking without a profound reverence, because it represents and it records the consciousness of God in the mind of Israel, not only at the time when it was compiled and edited, but it reflects the spiritual consciousness of generations much earlier than the age of historic records. So, too, the fragments as we have them—for they are only fragments—of the writings of the Hebrew prophets, and psalmists, and other writers who were contributors to that elaborate and incomparable Body of Literature which is called the Bible, do represent, each and all, so many illustrations and types of the spiritual genius of this exceptional people. It is no reply to these statements to assert, what we all know, that because many Jews have a very slender sense of the Divine gifts to their race, and comparatively few of them are filled to overflowing with the absorbing consciousness of their Divine mission, therefore the race has not been called for the purpose which is here claimed for it. It is no reply to taunt an individual Jew with claiming to spread the religion of his race whilst he is only expounding his private personal opinions. No one who is not a Jew has ever claimed that the religion which he seeks to spread was specially revealed to his own particular race. Every Christian missionary, on the contrary, proclaims that this revelation was given to the people of Israel. In saying this it is far from my

intention to reflect upon the earnestness and the purity of purpose which I am fully aware has ever engaged the true missionaries who were Christians. But the claim which they put forth is different in kind from that which alone would justify a Jew in summoning to the service of his mission all the spiritual or racial authority which does attach to the name of an Israelite. Dr. Martineau suggests that Mr. Montefiore and I have emerged from the Judaism of the Pentateuch and the Law. I can only answer that we stand on a certain rung of the same ladder, on which every teacher in Israel has ever stood. It is not for me to measure the distance or the length of that ladder, which constitutes the ever ascending religious development of Jewish history, but I will say that the claim for the universality of the Jewish faith could not stand if it were supposed that any one epoch in the history of our people had fully contained it and sealed it. If it be true that the scheme of Divine Providence permits and ordains the perpetual evolution in the affairs of his creatures, it is equally true that moral perceptions and spiritual insight must grow from age to age.

Mrs. Nathaniel Cohen admits, as do many who have not written in the symposium, that the spread of Judaism beyond our race is the ideal of Judaism and its true destiny, but she counsels those who think with me to missionize our own people first. God grant that it were in my power or that of any living Jew to do so. That power, if it exists anywhere, will be quickened by the very act of presenting the faith to those who stand at present outside the fold of Israel.

Mr. Montefiore's question as to my attitude towards the New Testament as a whole must receive the answer which, if not identical with that which I have given to his first two questions, must stand on parallel lines. I have no attitude towards the New Testament as a whole, but I am not unable to recognize the message of Israel despite its dilution wherever it is to be found in the pages of those strange

records. My friend Mr. F. C. Conybeare has made some critical observations about the New Testament, but he has recognized that it does contain elements of Jewish religious thought which are not out of harmony with other Jewish writings.

Mr. Estlin Carpenter has asked whether Judaism has produced any figures like those of Francis of Assisi, or Wesley. I need only refer him to the twelfth-century Jewish mystics and to Akiba. For saintliness of life, for martyrdom, and heroic devotion to a divine ideal, I challenge any scholar to produce the superiors, if indeed the equals, of those who laid down their worldly goods and their lives at the Spanish Inquisition.

In conclusion I would say that the message which Judaism has to convey differs from all other forms of Theism—less on the theological aspect of what it has to tell than upon its purely spiritual and religious side. We have the testimony, not of a book or of a million of books merely, but the testimony of a vast human tragedy—a long personal tale which has been told from father to son through two hundred generations of men, women, and children—people who have lived and loved and suffered and died and have never lost their faith. That faith has realized for them the most personal, intimate, and tender relation with the Divine Being which it is possible to conceive. The love which they have borne to him, and the love which they felt radiating upon their souls from him, is a story which has never yet been told since the Canon of Scripture was compiled. It was a love so transcendent, so imperishable, that it cannot be measured by the story of any other faith, just because it was independent throughout of that which outside the Jewish family is still believed to be indispensable to it, namely mediation. There is no inherent estrangement between God and man. There is no ransom due, but personal individual love and worship. Almighty God is close to each individual soul separately and distinctly, without mediation of any kind

whatever. There is nothing between us and our Maker—no intercessor, for every human being is his very own child. This wonderful and mysterious nearness to the great God, who is as infinite in his love as he is in his power, is the message upon which the Jew, as a Jew, has no need to speculate. With him it is absolute knowledge and certainty. Why are we to keep this secret to ourselves when the world around us is pining for a God who may be realized without terror and without a labyrinth of intellectual obstacles? It is a faith, I repeat; something to be seen, to be imbibed—never to be demonstrated. It is a gift which will be shared by the very contagion of a common worship. In God's name let Theists who are not Jews teach it if they can; but shall we who have for the longest period possessed it conceal our experience of it? "Let not the stranger think that the Lord hath utterly separated me from his people, for I will give unto the stranger which joineth himself to the Lord a place within my house and within my walls better than of sons and of daughters, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."

OSWALD JOHN SIMON.